

CORRECTED FISCAL NOTE

HB 624 - SB 1110

May 7, 1999

SUMMARY OF BILL: Requires each local education agency (LEA) to employ school counselors for grades pre-kindergarten through 12. The school counseling program would be established and operated under guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education would be required to report on the program's implementation and effectiveness in its annual report to the General Assembly. Present law requires LEAs to employ one guidance counselor for every 500 students in average daily attendance in grades one and two.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

On February 20, we issued a fiscal note on this bill which indicated an *increase in local government expenditures exceeding \$100,000* for five LEAs to employ a guidance counselor as required by the bill. This fiscal impact was based on 1997-98 data.

Based on additional information provided to us using 1998-99 data, the fiscal impact of this bill is estimated to be:

Increase Local Govt. Expenditures – Not Significant

This estimate is based on the following:

- Currently all LEAs have either employed a guidance counselor or contracted with another county or entity for the services of at least one guidance counselor and many LEAs employ more than is required.
- LEAs will not decrease the number of counselors they presently employ even though they will no longer be required to employ counselors on a 1:500 ratio in grades one and two.
- Guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education will not result in any additional expenditures required from the LEAs.

Note: The BEP formula currently contains a component that produces funding for one counselor for every 500 ADM in grades K-6 and one counselor for every 350 ADM in grades 7-12. However, there is no requirement that LEAs use funds generated in this area to hire counselors.

CERTIFICATION:

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

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CORRECTED**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James A. Davenport". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

James A. Davenport, Executive Director